Tuesday October 19, 2010

SGA Senate Meeting Minutes

I. Call to Order  7:00 pm

II. Roll Call
   A. Absent: Ariana Ehsan, Zhen Zeng, Rina Boswell, Rachel Desrochers, Wiame El Bouhali
   B. Quorum Met

III. Speaker – President Carol Christ
   A. Smith’s Budget
      1. Smith’s annual budget, without Financial Aid is 190 million dollars a year.
      2. Financial Aid is 48 million dollars a year.
      3. The discount rate is 38%
      4. Budget Breakdown:
         a.) 44% of budget comes from tuition
         b.) 31% comes from the Endowment and income
         c.) 13% comes from gifts and grants
      5. Smith does not ‘gap’ Financial Aid, according to Federal formulas.
      6. Every Smith student gets a ‘scholarship’ from the Endowment.
      7. There will be an open forum to further discuss these issues.
   B. How Smith Makes Decisions
      1. Trustees are responsible for decisions about Smith’s budget.
      2. Trustees are responsible for major decisions about Smith.
      3. They are advised by the President and the major committees
         a.) Advisory Committee on Resource Allocation – monetary decisions concerning budget
         b.) Committee on Mission and Priorities – long term decisions
         c.) Committee on Academic Priorities – determines majors and classes
         d.) Committee on Tenure and Promotion – Assistant Professor for 6 years, come up for tenure, analysis based on research, teaching, service
         e.) Students influence tenure and promotion through course evaluations.
   C. Questions
      1. Closing of Houses
         a.) House closing was part of the budget decision after the financial collapse in 2008.
         b.) The Endowment dramatically decreased and financial neediness of students increased. There was also a decline in annual giving.
         c.) ACRA and CMP met every two weeks for a year to try and decide the most responsible ways to maintain budget.
         d.) One budget cut was reducing the Smith footprint.
         e.) The student body is being reduced slightly and the first year class will remain the same.
         f.) We have a deferred maintenance problem at Smith. Dawes and Parsons would cost more to repair than is worth.
g.) The Trustees decided that closing those houses would be the better long-term decision.

h.) Language speaking houses or clusters are not being eliminated.

2. Reducing Ada Class Size
   a.) The discount rate for the Ada class was increasing markedly, up to 90%, which became a very expensive investment for the college.
   b.) There was also an explosion of applications from international students.
   c.) A committee was formed that suggested to keep the Ada budget the same, but to allow only the number of Adas that the budget would accommodate.
   d.) Helen Gurley Brown’s gift was 2 million dollars for the Ada program, including financial aid and the Magic Grants.

3. Smith will stay a women’s college. It is a unique opportunity.

4. Bridge and ISP will not be eliminated.

5. Sustainability efforts will continue.

IV. Rule Committee By Laws
   1. The Honor Board wants to select its own members through an application process.
   2. Section 3 is new. It is about the procedure of the Academic Honor Board.
   3. The appeal section only allows appeals in the case of new evidence.
   4. Board members can be removed if they fail to maintain confidentiality.

V. Committee Presentations
   1. Publicity is coming up with ideas including writing a column for the Sophian.
   2. Community reported on Victoria Kennedy’s rally, which a few Smith students attended. They also reported that Michael Ryan, who was a judge in Northampton for 18 years, was arrested for disorderly conduct and assault and battery. He will be tried in his own court. They also offered Yoga classes in and around Northampton.
   3. Archives is researching the College Hall takeover.
   4. Events suggest attending major and minor presentations this week.
   5. Dining explained that they are working on dining options for commuting Ada students and following up on questions.
   6. Curriculum explained that students can nominate faculty for the Sherrerd Prize and the Faculty Awards.

VI. Announcements
   A. EKTA Mendhi Night this Friday at 5:30 Davis Ballroom.
   B. Asian Tea House Saturday 7-9pm Free in Sage Hall, Sweeney Auditorium
   C. Pet a Pet Day, Noon - 2 tomorrow at Chapel Lawn
   D. Otelia Cromwell Day next week
   E. Need a Senate rep for Celebrating Collaborations